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/1 cont./ From a comparison of these names it is evident that the ethnic name of the Abkhaz was formed from aps, abs, aphs, aphsh. In the languages of the Caucasus, the sounds b, p, ph, m, v, and also s and sh, frequently alternate. Here are some examples: a-m-seba = a-v-seba = ap-h-she-pha /sic/, meaning "to fill"; suli = shuri, "soul"; m-ravali = b-ravali = b-reli = ph-reli, "many"; p-rke = b-rke, etc. Thus the identity of abs, aps, aphs, and absh, aps /sic/, and aphsh is beyond doubt. What, then, does abs or aphsh mean?

A 193 First of all it must be said that in the Abkhaz language nouns are preceded by "a," corresponding to the meaning of the article le or la in the French language. In compounds this "a" is often dropped. Let us, by way of example, take

A G identical words in the Grusian and Abkhaz languages:

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Grusian	Abkhaz	
khalakhi	a-khalakh	town
nathla	a-nathra	baptism
kambechi	a-kambash	buffalo
nana	a-nan	mother
kharthueli	a-khirthua	Grusian
lazi	a-laz	Laz
kaba	a-kaba	dress
/2/		
kaltha	a-kaltha	tails /of a coat/
kherkhi	a-khuarkhi	file
makrateli	a-makratil	scissors
kibe	a-kiba	stairs, ladder
gemo	a-gema	taste
khvabi	a-khvab	kettle
ugheli (Svan /Swan/: ughu)	a-ughu	yoke
guli (Svan:gui)	a-gu	heart
zari	a-zar	lament, sobbing

G 193 Frequently the Grusian language, too, has recourse to the method of forming nouns from verbal roots, with the addition at the end of the noun of the auxiliary verb li or ari (1)

[illegible]).

1. ari = is; in the Grusian language and

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/2 cont./ in its dialects this verb appears either in the form a (e.g., katsi-a = it is a man), or in the form li (ara-li = is not), or as ri or re (akhlo-re - it is near). Of these, the form ari is the most frequent in Grusian; re, ri, ro, in Mingrel; in Svan, li, ari; and in Abkhaz, l, r.

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(3rd person singular indicative, meaning "is"). For example, deg or dgi means "stand, stand firm"; a-deg or a-dgi = stand up; a-dgi-li = solid ground, earth, dry land. In the same way, nuskhe = count, m-nuskhe-li = counting, a-m-nuskhe-li = accountant.

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So the root consists merely of phs or phsh, which in many languages of the Caucasus, including Abkhaz and Grusian, has various related meanings: river, water, moisture, soul, spring, etc. For example, in Circassian, phdze or phse means "river, water"; in Grusian phsha means "river, brook, spring-water," phshe-na or phshi-nva = breathing, sigh, smell; m-phshueni- breathing, soul, spirit; phsa = to pour, phseli = urine; in Abkhaz, aphs = soul, aphsha = wind, air; adzi /see foreign text/ = water, river, brook; adzi-khi = well; adzi-zhi = lake; amshin = sea, etc.

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It is well known that many ancient peoples got their names from the waters on whose banks they lived. We will recall, for instance, from ancient Slavic history, the Pomoryane, Polaby, Buzhane, and others (2).

2. "Settling in Europe, the Slavs gave to the rivers those most ancient names, brought over by them from the East, which originally were used as designations for river, or water in general. In this way the names Sava, Drava, Odra (Oder), Ra, Upa, Oka, Don, Dunai, Dvina, are of Aryan origin, and related forms and roots with the above-mentioned general meaning are found in

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already collected for the writing of a full-size monograph dealing with the religious beliefs and customs of the K'art's, Ibers, and Svans. However, after some reflection I decided that the time was not ripe for such a task as some necessary data were lacking and I therefore decided to publish only the notes. Here and there, however, I have not been able to restrain myself from touching upon certain considerations and inquiries belonging to the larger plane, and these have overflowed in the form of footnotes.

The founders of Christianity, realizing that it was not so easy after all to eradicate from the consciousness of the majority of the population religious beliefs and rites observed for thousands of years, endeavoured to transform them, by wrapping them up in their own clothing and so adapting them to the Christian feasts and saints; thus they established their own annual festivals. Wherever possible I have followed in my account the established order of church festivals.

I should further point out that all the material herein described was collected in one village only, namely, Adzvibzha, in southern Abkhasia (the province of Abzhua), which, according both to Georgian and foreign (for instance, of the missionary A. Lamberti) historical sources constituted until the second half of the seventeenth century, part of Megrelia. This accounts for the fact that the Megrelian influence is so strongly noticeable. I think it is quite possible that some of the beliefs herein described may be capable of a different interpretation in Northern Abkhasia.

I begin my notes with Àyt'ar. In the first place, however, it will be expedient to explain my views on the chief deity *antswd*,* God.

Antswd is a compound word, consisting of *an*, "mother," and *tswa* (*ratswd*)—"many," which together denote "many mothers" or simply "mothers"; the word is thus in the plural form.[1] "In a formal or grammatical sense," says Dcharaia, "it is not an error; only the word 'mother' forms in the plural *àntswa* and 'God'—*antswd*, i.e. the difference is in the accent. But in colloquial speech both words,

* The underlined *tsw* is a trigraph representing a sound uttered with one articulative effort or breath impulse, of which the digraph "*ts*" represents the front lingual affricate equivalent to German "*z*" (*Zeit*, time), and the labial semi-vowel "*w*", the labialization of the preceding "*ts*". "*Tsw*" thus represents a labialized variety of "*ts*". See N. Y. Marr, *The Abkhasian Analytical Alphabet* (in Russian), Leningrad, 1928, p. 31. [Translator's Note.]

[1] It would be premature at this stage to enter into the question of the identification of the conception "god", in Abkhasian, with "mother", and any attempt to give a morphological explanation of the form, which is incontestably the plural in *-tswa*, with the aid of the Abkhasian word *ratswa* would be superfluous (see N. Marr, *Definition of the Language of the Second Category of the Achaemenian Cuneiform Inscriptions* (in Russian), in *Zapiski* (Bulletin) of the Eastern Branch of the Imperial Russian Archæological Society, St. Petersburg, 1915, §62. See also his *On the Origin of the Name Anapa* (in Russian). It is the usual linguistic method of the Abkhasians to interpret everything, even suffixes, such as the plural termination *-tswa* in the above instance, by means of the Abkhasian speech, with the aid of the Abkhasian words that survive to this day. [Note by the Editor of the *Kristianskii Vostok*.]

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'mothers' and 'God', are often pronounced in the same manner." [1] 196
"During the study of the different religious beliefs and customs of [195]
the Abkhasians," he continues, "we came across the following phrase among others: *antswa* r-*mərzə*—'the cause, guilt of God' (properly, 'the guilt or fault of gods,' N. Janashia). The roman r is the pronominal characteristic of the third person plural. . . . The above quoted construction—*antswa r-mərzə*—could not have been arrived at unless the word *antswa* was used in the plural," justly remarks the author; "were it in the singular, we would have had *antswa i-mərzə*."

Abkhasians regard the elements and manifestations of nature as rational beings. Each of these rational beings has his own gods, whom the orthodox Abkhasian serves honestly, in the light of his understanding. If the name of one, or more, of these gods has been forgotten by the people, he, the god, is simply called *inkhwə*[*]—"his 'part', 'share' of mother," or they use the full form *intswakhwə*—"his part of God," while under the influence of Christianity—*inəkhakhwə*, in which *akhwə* denotes "part, share, dole" and *anəkha*—"icon." [2]

In Abkhasian conception, God is One, but He is of infinitely numerous "doles" or parts. Not only each manifestation of nature, but also each tribe, family, or individual, has his own part of God, just as each Christian has his guardian-angel. The Abkhaz says *sntswakhwə*—"my (*s-* is the pronominal characteristic of the first [193]
person singular) part of God"; *untswakhwə*—"thy (*u-* is the pronominal characteristic of the second person singular) part of God." And it should be noted that one may offend against not only one's own "part of God", but also against "the part of God" of one's neighbour, or relation, etc. . . .

This conception of the Deity as a multiform being appears to account for the fact that the word *antswa* is in the plural. Here I will [191]
note that such a conception evidently did not prevail among the Abkhasians only; its traces remain to this day even among the

[1] P. Dcharaia, *On the Relation of the Abkhasian lang. to the Japhetic* (in Russian) in *Materials for Japhetic Linguistics*, St. Pb., 1912, vol. iv, p. 65. 104

[*] The combination "*ĥẖw*" represents a sound uttered with one breath impulse. The underlined "*ĥẖ*" ("*ĥẖ*") constitutes actually a trigraph in which the digraph "*ĥẖ*" represents a guttural fricative equivalent to German *ach-laut*, and the *linea subscripta* a hard diffusive glottal spirant, which is not to be identified with the palatal (front) "*ĥ*", and which is represented elsewhere, independently, as "*h̲*"; the combination "*ĥẖ*" (= *ĥẖ* + *h̲*) is thus a deeper guttural, glottal, sound than the German *ach-laut*. The labial semi-vowel "*w*" represents the labialization of the preceding "*ĥẖ*". "*K'ĥw*" thus represents a labialized variety of "*ĥẖ*". See N. Y. Marr, *The Abkhasian Analytical Alphabet*, pp. 48 and 39; see also his *Abkhasian-Russian Dictionary*, Leningrad, 1926, pp. xxxv–xxxvi. [Translator's Note.]

[2] I. Javakhishvili derives *anəkha* from the Georgian word *khati*, icon. May not *khati* be derived from the Abkhasian verb *akhat'ara? A-khə*, head, *at'ara*, to give, to set, to level the head. Or is it a mere consonance?

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Georgians. Thus, according to Iv. Gv. Gomelauri, the well-known pedagogue, in K'iziqi (Signakh district, in Kakhet'i) they say: *tchemi dsili ghmert'i*; *sheni dsili ghmert'i*, " my part of God," " thy part of God." A. Dsuladze, who is well acquainted with the life of the Gurian people, told me that similar expressions were also used in Guria.

Further, as the reader will see for himself, the word *an*, " mother " constitutes part of the names of a series of gods, and several of these names are of the feminine gender, as Dcharaia has also justly noticed. In this connection I should like to direct the attention of the reader to the names of two gods, namely, *jabrdn* and *zhwabrdn*.* Each of these words has in our opinion several connotations; *jabrdn* is compounded of several words: *j* is the root from the word *a-j-ma*, a goat; *a-b*, father; *r* the pronominal characteristic of the third person plural; and *an*, mother. Thus *jabrdn* denotes " father and mother of goats ", i.e. " (fore)parents of goats ", or " god of goats ". In the same manner *zhwabrdn* is compounded of *a-zhw*, a cow, and of the components just explained, so that the whole denotes " father and mother of cows ", i.e. " (fore)parents of cows ".[1] It seems to me that at the dawning of their religio-philosophical life, the Abkhasians evidently worshipped equally both their male and female ancestors. How strong is this ancestor-worship among the Abkhasians even to-day will be shown in my work *The Ancestor Cult*.

Thus, as is the case of Dcharaia, I think that the word *antswd* is derived from the word *an* in the plural. I also think that the name *antswd*, of the Supreme Being, arose from the deification of ancestors. At first it was evidently used with the plural termination, and in the feminine gender, and later, in the course of time, from " many mothers-gods " arose the One God *antswd*.[2] The changing of the gender of gods is often observed in the religions of the primitive peoples, and *antswd* therefore constitutes no exception.[3]

Antswd is One, but He is plural as to His parts. All the gods, of which we will speak below, are subject to and obey Him as the Supreme Being. In the tales, I was told, it is said that *antswd's* mother came from a Megrelian princely *gvari* of Mkheidze, the Abkhasian form of

* The combination *zhw* is to be uttered with one breath impulse; it represents a labialised variety of "*zh*" (= French "*j*"). Cf. "*tsw*", p. 118, n. *. [TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.]

[1] Such a morphological interpretation does not appear admissible, as the word *an*, if in this case it denotes " mother ", is never combined with *ab*, father, but governs the first part of the compound word, *jab* and *zwhab*, which, judging from the relative infix *r*, is assumed to be plural. [Note by the Editor, *Khr. V.*]

[2] And not *dsdsws*, as it should have sounded and does really sound " mothers ". See above, pp. 118–19. [Ed., *Khris. Voc.*]

[3] If this supposition turns out to be justified, and the word *antswd* is not of Sumero-Babylono-Assyrian origin (from *An*, *Ans*), its significance as a term employed in the history of religious beliefs generally will be greatly increased.

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which is *Khetsia*.[1] He has one sister from whom descends the demon family; that is why *antswá* has no right to destroy once for all the demons, his blood relations.

The Abkhasians appear to have made their gods after the image of man; one and the same god can be both good and evil in relation to a given person, according to the zeal with which he fulfils his duties towards him. The only means by which an angered god can be placated is by open-hearted confession and sacrificial offerings. And as the Abkhasians have a great number of gods their whole life is passed in continuous prayer and offering to gods.

I. Àyt'ar-nɔ̀hwa*

1. *Jabrán*

The Abkhasians make preparations for Shrovetide with particular solemnity, for its approach coincides with the observance of a series of religious rites and offerings, known under the general name of *Àyt'ar-nɔ̀hwa*. Àyt'ar is a great god of procreation and fertility, particularly with regard to the breeding of cattle. He is, as we shall see presently, the head of a whole pleiade of gods, who appear to be subordinate to him, and each of whom constitutes a part of him. *Nɔ̀hwa*, which is derived from *a-nɔ̀hwara*, to pray, denotes praying, prayer, whence *Àyt'ar-nɔ̀hwa*, meaning prayer, offering, to Ayt'ar.

The first in order of offerings is that performed in honour of the god *jabrán*, i.e. god of the goats (and sheep) (see above, p. 120).

On the Sunday, the last day of Shrovetide, the eldest woman of the family leavens dough from the flour of *ashɔ̀* (Georgian *shvria*, oat)[2] and places it in a warm corner. The dough is often kneaded with a stick, called *adswɔ̀*,† made specially for this purpose from the hazel tree, on account of which the dough itself is called *adswərəsa*, a combination of *adswɔ̀*, a stick with a tapering end, and *ərsara*, to knead.

On the Shrove Thursday the eldest woman of the family—*ap'hwɔs-tsk'ya* ("woman pure")—takes a portion of this leaven, kneads it with the stick, adds some water and flour, boils it, and then bakes maizebread—*amgyal*. This maizebread must be baked on a hearth.

* For the pronunciation of "h" see p. 119, n. *. The combination "hw" represents a labialized variety of "h". [Translator's Note.]

† The combination "*dsw*" which is to be pronounced with one breath impulse, represents a labialized variety of "*ds*". For this latter sound see p. 329 (*b'*). [Translator's Note.]

[1] N. Y. Marr, *On the Religious Beliefs of the Abkhasians* (in Russian), in *Khristianskii Vostok*, "The Christian East," St. Pb., 1915, vol. iv, issue 1, p. 138.
(A translation of this work is given in this number, pp. 157–180, see p. 171. Ed. *Georgica*.)

[2] It should be noted that in all these sacrificial offerings oat flour and, on rare occasions, millet flour, is used. Without this flour or unless it is at least used as an ingredient the offering becomes inadmissible. The reason for this is probably because *ashɔ̀* (and *ghomí*, millet) alone constituted the staple food.

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[796] *à-khwazhw* and entreats god *Alèshkintr* to grant the house faithful dogs—those best friends of man and reliable watchers of his weal; the prayer at the same time spills some of the hot *a-k'warəpà* or *a-*
[260] *k'warpà* (a thick broth of *à-khwazhw*, or millet) towards the sea and some towards the mountains, uttering "*Wootsw!* Burn out the tongue
[769] of the evil-speaker, the eyes of the evil-eyed", and continues his prayer.
[716] In the opinion of the commission, *Alèshkintr* is also "part" of *Àyt'ar*. *Ala* denotes dog; *shkintr*, however, is incomprehensible.

The commission explained that "dog" was mentioned before
[23] "man" on account of the former being more capable of loyalty to a master than the latter.

671 It should be noted that the common law values the blood of a
685 dog in proportion to that of its owner; the blood of a baron's dog is
825 equal to that of a baron, of a peasant's to that of a peasant, etc.

539 From the lips of K. Dolbaia (Abkh. Delba), an 80-year-old Abkha-
231 sian, who possesses an expert knowledge of the Abkhasian language, I wrote down the following tale:—

"In ancient times, when Abkhasia was inhabited by giants and devas (daevas), Aslan, one of the giants, would not leave the devas in peace. Once, when he was asleep, the devas crept up stealthily, bound him with silk laces, blinded and killed him, and threw him into a pit as deep as a well. On their return from their usual hunting expedition, his dogs discovered their master, but they could not pull him out of the well. They fell upon an ox-cart driver who happened to be passing by, and compelled him to rescue their master from the well and unbind him. The dogs licked Aslan for three days and three nights, and so brought him back to life and restored his sight." [1]

[804] The following superstition prevails among the Abkhasians. If someone, noticing the heavens bursting open, succeeds in uttering *Làri, vàri, khəzè, jkhwàri*, he will have all his wishes fulfilled. Only one woman was honoured with this great good fortune, the widow of a Mukvabba. *Làri* is interpreted as *lala* which denotes dog; *vàri*
[192] (*wàri* from *aowyè*,* man) as man; *khəzè* as whey; *jkhwàri* as the crust of millet porridge; uttered together they are supposed to mean "make me rich". My Abkhasian advisers repeatedly emphasized that the dog was mentioned first because of its unexampled loyalty and fidelity to man, his master.

796 (d) *Àmza-nəhwa*, Prayer to the Moon.
796 The supplicant takes the moon-shaped cake and says: "Thou,

[104] * See p. 122, note *. According to Marr, the throat participates vigorously in the pro/nuction of this composite or diffusive sound, and in a way as if the sound of the guttural "ع" (the ancient Arabic '*ain*) were also heard. [TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.]

[1] The Academician N. Y. Marr has kindly directed my attention to Moses of
[171] Khoren, who describes how by order of Semiramis, the dogs of *Arsès* (cf. *Alèshkintr*) licked the corpse of *Aro* or *Arsès*, the Armenian Prince, in order to revive him.

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539 benefactor, the moon, the Abkhasians fire at the monster and thereby
[789] drive him away." [1]

(3) The Moon and the Sun. A beautiful Abkhasian widow woman had a son and a daughter, who often absented themselves from home for the whole day; they would go off early in the morning and return only late in the evening. No amount of coaxing or tenderness on the part of the mother sufficed to keep the children at home or stop them from indulging in their daily adventure, so she decided to shadow them. She found they were seated under the shadow of an ancient oak, in a thick forest, enjoying themselves in an agreeable pastime with the moon and the sun. Before them were all sorts of eatables. The mother, flying into a passion, flung fresh dung at the moon and the sun. The sun-sister, being a more fastidious creature, washed herself, but the less particular moon-brother did not do so, and hence arose the dark patches on the moon; the brother, the moon, and the sister, the sun,[2] then soared up to the sky for ever, while the widow and her children returned home."

821 Here I will also note that the Abkhasians always welcome the new moon by looking at its reflection through a mirror, or over a silver piece.

[753] A certain mainly infantile disease, similar to convulsions, is called by the Abkhasians *dmzakra*, i.e. " to be caught by the moon ".

(e) *Àmra-nǐhwa*, Prayer to the Sun.

794 When he has finished the invocation addressed to Àmza (the
[796] moon), the supplicant takes the sun-shaped cake, and, with the women surrounding him, he says: " Thou, Àmra, *Àyt'ar inǐswakhwadà*, the great part of the great *Àyt'ar*, grant warmth, and caress the women of our family! Increase our cattle," etc., and then spills *k'warpa* (*a-k'warpà*) in the usual manner, uttering *wootsw*.

According to D. I. Gulìa, in the village of Dchilou they use the form *Amera* instead of *Àmra*.

(f) *Andp'a-nàga*.

[796] After that the supplicant takes *alahwàra* (a large mortar) and, addressing himself to the god *Andp'a-nàga*, says: " Thou, the great part of the great god *Àyt'ar*, send us the warmth of thine eyes and of

[1] Exactly what *Atèwyə* denotes is difficult to explain. In connection with the above quoted tale, the etymology of this word may, however, perhaps elucidate its significance. *Atè* denotes the barn- or screech-owl; *wy* may be the root from the word *a-owyə* (man); consequently *atèwyə* may denote " man-owl ". And by *atèwyə* is, perhaps, understood the sister devouring the brother-moon.

[2] Their gender is often confused: sometimes the moon and the sun are sisters or brothers, sometimes the moon is brother and the sun sister.

[3] I think the Georgian word *mizezi*, cause, is derived from the Abkhasian *mzezu*, cause (from *dmza*, moon). (It is doubtful! Ed. *Khrist. Vost.*)

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thy heart! Grant us such a crop of maize that at its gathering we shall have to bend the stalks with a hook (Geo. *Kavi*), and cut them down with a bill!" *K'uarpa* (*a-k'warpá*) is then spilled, and the cattle is called by shouting *wootsw*. *Anáp'a-nàga* is the harvest god. In my opinion the etymology of these words is as follows: *Ap'ará* denotes "to twist or twine" something (a rope, for example), as well as "to pass with difficulty through something", for instance, a maize or millet field, crowd, etc.; *nàgara*—to carry: *inap'òo indgo*—carriest thou by forcing thy way, by pushing asunder.

There is also an evil spirit of the harvest called *Jaja*, but we will speak of her (she is a goddess) separately, as she is not a member of this septenary.

(*g*) *Atchshò-shyashyàna* (god of horses).

Finally, the supplicant takes the cake whose shape represents a horse (or three *á-khwazhwə*), and entreats (the god) *Atchshò shyashyàna* —the great part of the great god *Àyt'ar*, to increase his horses (donkeys and asses). Again *wootsw* and *ak'warpá*. The word *atchshò* denotes horse; *shwyashyàna* or *shashana* is incomprehensible.

With this ceremonial *Àyt'ar-nòhwa* ends.

Judging from what has already been said above, it is clear that *Àyt'ar* is the head of a whole pleiade of gods, each of whom constitute a special part of him; it is noteworthy that in every supplication addressed to any one of these gods, *Àyt'ar* is also invariably referred to as one whose part is the deity in question. The religio-philosophical mind of the Abkhasians has arranged the hierarchy of these gods in the following order:—

ÀYT'AR: JABRÀN, ZHWABRÀN, ALÀSHKINTR, ÀMZA, ÀMRA, ANÀP'A-NÀGA; AND ÀTCHSHÒ-SHYASHYÀNA.

Àyt'ar is one in seven parts. This conception of God in parts is prominently expressed in *Àyt'ar*.

(*h*) *Lòmilah* (*Nòmirah* or *Shòmirah*).

Àyt'ar-nòhwa ends with *Lòmilah*. What this word denotes is difficult to explain. It appears to denote the god of conjugal happiness of the youth.

On the same evening, after the conclusion of *Àyt'ar-nòhwa*, the young people, boys and girls, meet at one of their houses, and begin to predict their fortunes. It is a time of laughter and gaiety, and the young people enjoy themselves to their hearts' content. *A-hwakwàr* of usual size is prepared in great quantities; and also enough of a smaller size, extremely salt in flavour, to enable each participant to have three. In one of these small *ahwakwàr* is placed a hazel chip, called *dnasp'adsw*, "stake of happiness." Each person is given three

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small salt *akwakwdr*. They then go out into the garden and eat their scones in silence in the dark, at the same time entreating *Làmilakà* to bestow upon them a happy married life. Whoever finds the "stake of happiness" in his or her scone must celebrate this stroke of luck by giving a party for all the participants. On the following day the *Làmilakà* party is given at the house of the lucky one. After consuming the little *akwakwdr* all go back into the house and sit down to a supper which is also an occasion for gaiety. In order to maintain the feeling of thirst at its strongest, no one is allowed to drink anything. The Abkhasians believe that the thirsty person will be given a drink by the one with whom he or she is fated to share conjugal life. In such manner do the young people of Abkhasia tell their fortunes.[1]

II. Àmshap'

In this chapter I have collected together all those rites grouped around the festival of Easter, called in Abkhasian *Àmshap'*.[2] The *Àmshap'* celebrations began[3] two weeks before Easter Sunday, and continued for exactly three weeks, during which time custom forbade working in the field, except in the cotton field and the kitchen garden. On Sunday, two weeks before Easter Day, the Abkhasians decorated their houses with the first spring flowers, and this Sunday is called *aioba*, which is derived, probably, from the Megrelian *aia*, violet. Until *aioba*, playing football or other games was forbidden. After that day, however, seasonal games were in full swing. Dressed in their finest attire, the whole population gave themselves up to public sports. Among the most popular pastimes were football, wrestling, stone throwing, trick-riding, dancing, singing, and *akyshir* (in Geo. *rikiap'ela*, "game of skittles," according to Tchubinashvili's or Tchubinov's Dictionary).

The following Sunday—Palm Sunday—the Abkhasians call *baioba* (a "Megrelianization"). The name is derived from *a-baia*, a yellow flower which grows profusely in the fields of Abkhasia in the early spring.[4] On this day also the Abkhasians decorated their houses with flowers, particularly with *abala*.

[1] *Anasp'a dzw* has its double in Guria and Imeret'i *bedis-kveri*, cracknel of fate, which is known also to the Tiflis Armenians. I think the Pshav *dzadzola* arose on this ground.

[2] It is, in my opinion, a compound word, consisting of *amsh*, day, and *ap'* (*yap'a*), accepted, appointed, fixed; *Àmshap'* thus denotes "pre-ordained day" (Geo. *saghebuli dghe*).

[3] These celebrations are no longer observed; they are traditional, and I am describing them from memory, or from the words of the Commission.

[4] According to Tchubinashvili (Tchubinov), and to R. Erist'avi (Eristov), *baia* is crows-foot, *ranunculus*. Erist'avi, considering the word to be Megrelo-Imero-Gurian, gives as its K'art'(l)ian equivalent *tskhviris-ostskhala*. The word *a-baia*, in Abkhasian *a-mdrtch*, is, according to the botanists of the Sukhum Botanical Garden, the equivalent of the Russian *lyutik tedki*.

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of an analogical formation in a *sh*-root- (= creating, to create, whence the verbal noun *ashard*) word *ashatswà*, which represents an epithet of a deity, and is equivalent to Georgian *gamtcheni*, creator.[1] I have not heard this word used apart from its association with the word God. This root is usually used in its past-participle form. A popular Abkhasian expression is *antswà-hazshàz*, Creator God, but the following phrases are also in common use:—*ashatswà irshaz*, by the Creator (lit. creators') created (said of something very pleasing), and *ashatswà irmshaz*, by the Creator (lit., creators') not created (said of something unpleasing). In these examples *ashatswà* is understood to be in the plural, which is unmistakably borne out by the pronominal particle r (*i-r-shaz*, *i-r-mshaz*) which indicates the plurality of the subject (the determinative word in our examples).

It may, however, be argued that the phrases just quoted are composite, and that the particle indicated, a fossilized morphe which has lost its meaning. We will therefore quote another phrase, *nas ashatswà irshàma art'*, "Is it possible that the Creator (lit. creators) created these?" (it was said of the animals), in which *ashatswà* is directly represented as the subject in the plural. This word, and the notion conveyed by it, must have simultaneously undergone the same metamorphosis as the basic name itself, i.e., they must have lost first the intrinsic and then the formal meaning; it became a simple plurale tantum, for instance, in the widely used name for a kind of sacrificial animal, *ashatswà-dzatwə*, the Creator's (lit. creators') sacrificial animal, in which we should have had, in accordance with the rules of the Abkhasian compound word-formation, the form *ashatswà-rdzatwə*. . . .

It is clear that in this case the result of the acute conflict between old and new ideas, and in connection with it, between dead and living forms, is far less definite than in the case of *antswà* itself. The changes to which the latter has been subjected have been more rapid; but nevertheless, owing to language inertia, we find facts which reveal the original meaning of the process of word-formation. One such fact, quoted by Uslar, is given above. Of no less interest, in my opinion, is an example I found: the heroine of a story which I noted down, bears the following name, *antswà rt'əp'hà khànkwla*, that is "God (‖ gods)-their-daughter-Khakula" in other words, the god's daughter Khàkûla (Khàkûla being a girl's name). The same pronominal particle r (*r-t'əp'hà*) explicitly indicates here that for the remote ancestors of the speaker, God represented the union of numerous forces.[2]

[1] In Megrelian, *odabads*. See Janashia, *The Abkhasian Cult and Mode of Life* (in Russian) in *The Christian East*, St. Pb., 1916, vol. v, issue 3, p. 168. Also Marr, *On the Religious Beliefs of the Abkhasians* (in Russian) in *The Christian East*, vol. iv, issue 1, p. 132.

[2] See also Dcharaia, op. cit., p. 32.